

Summertime



ONE SUMMER
EVENING, IN A
SMALL, LOOSELY
DEVELOPED
MOUNTAIN VILLAGE,
THE POWER
WENT OUT.





IT'S NO GOOD
LOOKING LIKE
THE PHONE
LINE'S DOWN
TOO!



MIYO

MIYO



IN FACT, LAST
YEAR WHEN I
CALLED MY
NEIGHBOR MIYO
DURING A
BLACKOUT, WE
ENDED UP GOING
OUT

ROMANCE IS
REALLY IN THE
AIR AT A TIME
LIKE THIS!



WHEN CIVILIZED PEOPLE
LOSE THEIR ELECTRICITY,
THERE'S NOTHING TO
DO BUT EAT AND DRINK
I'LL HAVE THE FOLKS
NEXT DOOR OVER FOR A
PARTY

GOOD
LUCK,
DEAD!



WHY, LAST YEAR,
EVERYTHING IN THE
FOODZEEZ WENT
BAD DURING THE
BLACKOUT. I'M NOT
WRITING IT ALL GO
TO WASTE THIS TIME

WE'VE
GOING
TO EAT
EVERYTHING
TODAY



AM
SHOCKED!



AAAAA!
WHAT'S WITH
ALL THIS
FOOD?



KAN, COME ON
OVER TO OUR
PLACE INSTEAD

COME ON
OVER, WE'RE
CLEANING
OUT THE FOODZEEZ



THE BAD PART ABOUT LIVING IN A VILLAGE IS HOW EVERYONE'S ALWAYS INTERFERING OUT IN THE PITCH DARK. NO ONE'S GOING TO SPOT US.

HEP.



TOORU! TOORU! YOUR PA WON ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS! EVERYONE'S COMING OVER.

TOORU? WHERE IS THAT GUY?



YOU'RE FINALLY COMING TO LIVE WITH ME NEXT WEEK...

STILL FEELS LIKE I'M DREAMING.



THANKS FOR INVITING ME, TOORU.



BUT DON'T YOU WORRY YOU'LL LIKE LIVING WITH MA AND PA -- MORE THAN WITH ME EVEN.



YOU AND THIS VILLAGE AND THE NEIGHBORS AND THE OTHER NEIGHBORS AND THE MOUNTAINS AND THE RIVERS AND THE SCENTS AND THE CLOUDS -- I LIKE THEM ALL.



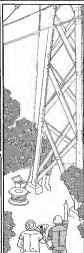
I LIKE YOUR PARENTS A LOT.



AND MA.

HILLSIDE AND FIELDS
FISH AND BIRDS AND
RIVERS AND BUTTERFLIES,
ANYWHERE

MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS
BOATS AND COWS



WHEN WE WERE KIDS,
I NEVER WOULD HAVE
GUESSED HE WAS
SUCH A BRAINiac
MORE THAN JUST MY
FRIEND, HE WAS
MY FAVORITE
CO-CONSPIRATOR



SHINICHI WAS SUCH
A PRODIGY THAT HE
WENT TO TOKYO
UNIVERSITY AND
ENDED UP WORKING
AS A JOURNALIST
FOR A MAJOR
PAPER INSTEAD OF
CONFINED TO
THE VILAGE LIFE



FROM THE VILLAGE,
IT'S AN HOUR TO THE
STATION BY BUS



Street-style bus

Adorable
original
style



I THOUGHT HE WAS
SWEET ON ME TOO,
BUT BEFORE
WE COULD HAVE
THINGS OUT, HE
WENT OFF TO TOKYO

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IT'D BETTER
SO TELL
HIS FAMILY



AT FIVE, THE
TRAIN CAME
AND WENT,
BUT SHINICHI
NEVER GOT
OFF

THE NEXT TRAIN
WAS THE LAST
ONE OF THE DAY
SHINICHI WASN'T
ON THAT ONE
EITHER



MAYBE HE'LL
BE ON THE
NEXT TRAIN



SOMETHING JUST
DON'T FEEL WE
HAVEN'T HAD A
SINGLE WORD
FROM HIM, AND
MY CALLS AREN'T
GOING THROUGH

DID HE
COME? DID
SHINCHI COME?

WAS
NOT
YET

SHINCHI
IS HERE

TWO DAYS PASSED,
THREE DAYS PASSED,
AND STILL SHINCHI DIDN'T COME

SHINCHI
IS HERE

MY FATHER
SAID THERE'S
NOTHING TO
WORRY ABOUT,
BUT I CAN'T
SEEM TO GET
MY MIND AT
EASE

I'VE GOT NO
RIGHT TO ASK,
WITH YOUR
WEDDING THREE
DAYS AWAY
AND ALL, BUT

WHAT
COULD IT BE?
DO YOU
THINK HE
HAD TO GO
AWAY ON
BUSINESS?

YOU WENT TO
SCHOOL IN
TOKYO, TOO, SO
YOU'D KNOW THE
CITY BETTER
THAN US

WITH A
PRESENT

DON'T WORRY
I'LL BE BACK
THE DAY
BEFORE THE
CEREMONY

COULD YOU GO
THERE AND FIND
OUT WHAT'S
HAPPENED
TO SHINCHI?





CONGRATULATIONS
FROM SHINICHI
KIRAZZANI



OK, DO HEARD
PLANNING ON
COMING BACK



U.S.
EUROPE
SOVIET-
EUROPEAN-
RINO-
JAPANESE
TOTAL WAS
REARDED OUT
SOVIET ASST
AIDS NINE



WHAT'S
THIS?



THERE'S A
MESSAGE
PAD.



OH, MAYBE
THEY'RE
EXPLANATION
MARKED WRITER
IN GOLD



WHAT'S
THIS
DRAWING?



MAYBE HE
HEARD A
MESSAGE, BUT
NOTHING CAME
OF IT



U.S.
EUROPE
SOVIET-
EUROPEAN-
RINO-
JAPANESE
TOTAL WAS
REARDED OUT
SOVIET ASST
AIDS NINE

IF THIS
WERE TRUE,
THERE'D NO
WAY HE
WOULD
STILL BE
ALIVE



WHERE'D
HE HEAR
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS?



TOKYO'S IN
EXACTLY THE
SAME STATE
OF CONTROLLED
CHAOS AS THREE
YEARS AGO

BUT THERE
HASN'T EVEN
BEEN A HINT
OF ANYTHING
IN THE NEWS

EVEN THOUGH
THREE YEARS
HAVE PASSED

THAT'D RIGHT
THERE
ISN'T
EVEN THE
SMALLEST
CHANGE
TOKYO'D
JUST
HOW I
REMEMBER
IT

WELL,
EXACTLY
THE SAME
AS THREE
YEARS AGO



1985
1985
1985

COME TO THINK
OF IT, ISN'T
BLACK PM ON
JULY WHEN
THE POWER
LINE WENT
DOWN?



1985
1985



AND AFTER
THAT, IT RAINED





A WIND
CHIME IS
PINGING

ding

I THINK OF
RAIN AND
LIGHTNING AS
GOING
TOGETHER, SO
IT SEEMED OK,
IF WE ASSUME
THAT, THEN.



IN SUMMER, I KNOW
THERE ARE ALWAYS
WIND CHIMES
HANGING IN THE
WINDOW, SO I'M
HEARING WIND CHIMES.



HOW COULD
THERE BE ANY
WIND CHIMES?

IF IT'S
TRUE.

BUT IF
THIS
MIND IS
TRUE,
THEN.



THERE'S NOTHING!

OUTSIDE THE
WINDOW, THERE'S
NO CITY, NO
PEOPLE, NO WIND
CHIMES. NOTHING.

SWH?
IT'S TRUE!

I TOO AM
MY BODY.



THEN IT'S ALL
TRUE.
EVERYTHING'S
BEEN BLOWN
AWAY THEN... THAT
AIR AND...



EVERYTHING
HERE.





IT'S ALL A
ILLUSION



WHEN I
CAME
TO, I
WAS ON
THE MARY
LINE
HOME

every-
one
every-
one



OF COURSE I'LL GO
HOME. WITH A PRESENT



EVERYTHING
FROM THE
MOMENT THAT
THINGS WENT
-WHAT I
THOUGHT WAS
A
THINGS WENT
-IT WAS
NOTHING
MORE THAN
AN ILLUSION

MOUNTAINS
AND
MAYOR
PARENTS
PLACES
ALL
ILLUSIONS

every-
one
every-
one

TO YOUR BELOVED
MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS,
FOUNTS AND COWS. TO
THE VILLAGE THAT HOLDS
US LIKE A NET, MYOHO

I HAVE TO
I WANT TO
I WILL

I'LL CUP HE
LEFT SHO
FOR ME
AND WINE
OFF ON A
LONG,
LONG
ADJOURNMENT



I'LL HAVE TO TELL
THE
VILLAGERS
SOMETHING ABOUT
CHIRCHI...

I'LL CALL
HEP. IF I
CALL,
MYOHO WILL
COME
MEET ME
AT THE
BUS STOP



I'LL GET TO
THE
TRANSFER
STATION IN
FOUR
HOURS.
THERE'LL BE
A PHONE
THERE, OF
COURSE

THE
WATERMELONS
AND PUMPKINS
ARE READY FOR
HARVEST



IT'S A
BRILLIANT
DAY. THE
CORN IS
WAVING IN
THE FIELDS

TOMORROW,
YOU'LL
COME TO
LIVE WITH ME



Summertime

I wonder what I'd do if, all of a sudden one day, someone told me I was no longer of this world and that I should let go of my worldly attachments and pass on.



I think I'd rather go back to the delusion if you don't mind.

A LITTLE HISTORICAL NOTE FROM THE TRANSLATOR [FEEL FREE TO IGNORE IF YOU'RE OVER 30]:

THIS STORY WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN SEPTEMBER OF 1984 DURING ONE OF THE TENSIEST POINTS IN THE COLD WAR. ALMOST EXACTLY ONE YEAR BEFORE, THE USSR HAD SHOT DOWN KOREAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 007 OVER THE SEA OF JAPAN. RESCUE OPERATIONS RECOVERED NOTHING BUT SOME CLOTHING UNTIL EIGHT DAYS LATER WHEN BODY PARTS BEGAN WASHING ASHORE IN HONOLULU.

THIS WAS THE ERA OF OPERATION RYAN (A SOVIET ANTI-US INTELLIGENCE EFFORT), PERISHING II MISSILE DEPLOYMENT IN EUROPE, AND THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE (BETTER KNOWN AS "STAR WARS") IN THE UNITED STATES. IT MAY BE HARD TO IMAGINE TODAY, ESPECIALLY FOR ANYONE TOO YOUNG TO REMEMBER THE COLD WAR, BUT AT THE TIME, THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST SEEMED IMMINENT. I REMEMBER THAT HERE IN THE US, THERE WAS THIS CONSTANT LURKING FEAR OF BEING HELPLESS IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL WAR. MAYBE IT WASN'T SOMETHING MOST PEOPLE THOUGHT THAT MUCH ABOUT ON A DAY TO DAY BASIS, BUT IT TURNED UP CONSTANTLY IN BOOKS AND MOVIES OF THE PERIOD. I CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW MUCH MORE HELPLESS PEOPLE IN OTHER COUNTRIES MUST HAVE FELT AS THEY WATCHED THE SUPERPOWERS ENSLAVE THE REST OF THE WORLD IN OUR SPYING AND OUR ALLIANCES AND OUR PROXY WARS.

I CHOOSE THIS PIECE BECAUSE I FELT IT DID A WONDERFUL JOB OF CAPTURING THAT EVER-PRESENT COLD WAR FEAR THAT ORDINARY PEOPLE COULD WAKE UP ONE MORNING TO FIND THAT THE WORLD HAD ENDED, BUT WITH A PARTICULARLY JAPANESE (AND BUDDHIST) SPIN.





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